



CONGRESSMAN FRANK PALLONE



Monmouth County Report

Pallone Leads Fight Against Offshore Drilling

Some Republicans in Congress are trying every legislative maneuver to drill for oil and natural gas off the Jersey Shore. During consideration of the Fiscal Year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, the House approved an amendment I cosponsored that removed a provision allowing offshore natural gas drilling as close as three miles off our beaches.

For over 20 years, federal law has protected our waters by preventing oil and gas drilling off the New Jersey coast. In May, the House renewed its commitment to that ban by passing the amendment.

During debate on the amendment, I stressed the fact that opening the outer continental shelf to gas exploration would not lower the record gas prices we face today. It would take at least seven years to begin drilling, and there is not nearly enough oil off our coastline to even make a dent in our continued dependence on foreign oil.



At a press conference in Monmouth Beach, Pallone (middle) stood with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lisa Jackson and denounced legislation allowing offshore natural gas drilling.

The risks far outweigh any future benefits. All it takes is one accident on an industrial drilling rig in the ocean to devastate New Jersey's tourism economy. An accident could ruin our beaches and destroy fisheries and other marine life.

Unfortunately, the victory was short-lived as House Republicans brought another drilling bill to the floor in June that would undo current protections and allow states to open offshore areas to oil and gas drilling. While the bill passed in the House, I will work with my Senate colleagues to prevent such a measure from ever becoming law and vow to continue to fight against what has become a continuous threat to New Jersey's coasts.

Protecting Your Right to Know About Contaminants in Your Neighborhood

Scientists have discovered strong evidence indicating that exposure to industrial chemicals is widespread in the U.S. and can lead to serious health problems. In response to a tragic 1986 chemical accident in India that killed thousands, Congress passed a law requiring operators of industrial plants to inform their neighbors about any harmful chemicals they release into the environment.

Recently, the Bush administration's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed weakening the reporting requirements, known as the toxic release inventory.

This latest attempt to weaken environmental

protections and endanger the health of our communities is disturbing. That's why I offered an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill to prevent the EPA from implementing these misguided plans. The House of Representatives passed the amendment by a vote of 231-187.

Communities have a right to know what toxic chemicals are being dumped in their backyards. I will continue to oppose any efforts to undermine these critical reporting requirements so communities continue to have access to information about dangerous chemicals being released into the air or water.

Pallone Highlights the Impact of Global Warming

The issue of global warming presents serious threats to our coasts, and we must do everything in our power to prepare for its impacts and minimize its effects.

According to a report issued by Princeton University researchers, under the worst-case scenario, global warming could cause the sea level off New Jersey's coast to rise nearly four feet by the end of the century. Such a rise would reduce our shoreline by almost 500 feet. The report also found that so-called "100-year floods" would happen every five years.

Unfortunately, the Administra-

tion and the Republican majority in Congress have largely ignored the issue, often at the behest of corporate polluters.

Last month, I brought together mayors of New Jersey's coastal towns to discuss the impacts of global warming and sea level rise on their communities.

In Washington, during consideration of the Fiscal Year 2007 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, I successfully offered an amendment that provides \$1 million for a study of the coastal impacts of global warming.

New Jersey is one of several

states leading efforts to fight global warming, but we cannot solve this problem alone. As a senior member of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, I will continue to urge my colleagues in Washington to raise the profile of this issue and enact innovative energy policies—based on energy efficiency and conservation—that will reduce harmful greenhouse emissions.

Helping to Keep the Veterans' Clinic Open

Although Fort Monmouth is scheduled to close in 2011, I am fighting to keep the Fort's Veteran Community Outpatient Clinic on the property.

In several letters to officials at the Veterans Administration and the Pentagon, I urged them to consider the care and well-being of the local veterans in New Jersey served by the base.

I will continue to insist the clinic remains at Fort Monmouth. Easy access to the quality care provided there is a right our veterans have earned through their service to our nation.

Possible Increase in Recreational Fishing Fees Prevented

Recently, I halted a plan by the Bush administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to impose a mandatory annual fee of \$20 to \$25 on recreational anglers for the right to fish.

During a hearing in the House Resources Committee, NMFS Director William Hogarth admitted that the Administration did indeed plan to implement the new fee. In response, during the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, I offered an amendment preventing NMFS from charging recreational fishermen a fee. The amendment passed without opposition in committee, and will hopefully remain part of the final bill when it becomes law.



Rep. Pallone's District Offices – Reaching Out to You

If you have a problem of a federal nature or want to obtain information on legislative issues, contact these offices, open weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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